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DRAFT REPORT

Addendum

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PROGRAMME QUESTIONS

Proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001

Programme 14. Economic and social development in Africa

1. At its 29th meeting, on 21 June 1996, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered programme 14, Economic and social development in Africa, of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001.

Discussion

2. While welcoming the renewal process in the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and taking note of the efforts at reform, a number of delegations were convinced that it was necessary to pay more attention to the need for more pragmatism and improvement in order to produce a proposed plan containing concrete and significant action aimed at addressing the real needs of Africa. The commendable efforts of the new Executive Secretary towards reform needed to be developed into a programme related to the staff and financial resources available to ECA and responding to the actual needs of African countries.

3. Several delegations noted that the objectives were not precise and expressed the view that the proposed programme could have placed more emphasis on measurable outcomes. Many very important sectors were left out. In

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addition, there were no activities aimed specifically at bringing about real improvement in international cooperation in favour of the development and recovery of Africa.

4. With regard to the role of ECA in the fight against poverty, as indicated in paragraph 14.7 (d) of the proposed programme, some delegations stated that excellence in this area was to be found not in outlining what was and was not working, but in assessing the underlying causes of poverty. In that regard, a number of delegations called for more tangible efforts.

5. A number of delegations expressed concern that the proposed programme did not give adequate treatment to certain important programme activities such as, in particular, those relating to trade, external debt, the fight against AIDS, crime prevention, international aid for development and gender issues.

6. Some delegations considered that the role of men should also be highlighted in paragraph 14.14.

Conclusions and recommendations

7. The Committee recommended approval by the General Assembly of programme 14 of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001, with the following modification, taking into account the results of the process of internal restructuring currently under way in ECA: in paragraph 14.7 (d), replace the words "by indicating what is and is not working" with "by analysing the causes of success and failures noted".